Re: Fugio Coppers
January 12, 1998

To: Rob Retz

From: Eric P. Newman

Please note pp. 70-71 of "The Robert Morris Papers Project" by Elizabeth Nuxoll in American Journal of Numismatics, Vol. 9 (1997) as to William Duer fraud.

To: Rob Retz
January 21, 1998

From: Eric P. Newman
Re: Fugio

You Letter marked January 2, 1998 forced me to open my packing box marked FUGIO. I had been tossing data in it for years. I even found the original paste ups for my Fugio article of 1949 or 1952, etc. The thing I looked for was whether I had a copy of the Damon Douglas research when I wrote things up. Probably not. I found no correspondence with him. When did he die? When did he give ANS his papers ? I then found some small boxes and "Eureka" there was a microfilm marked JARVIS and the FUGIO COPPERS by Damon Douglas. I found correspondence with Taxay, Spilman, Barnsley, Picker, Yale, ANS, American Antiquarian Society and many others. This stuff should be straightened out and examined.

If all this doesn't encourage you to Fugio here and go over this material with me then I will be surprised. Would you like to stay at my house? Is some convenient weekend the best time ? Maybe I can sort some of it beforehand. There are loads of pictures but perhaps you do not need these.

Sometimes I am glad I am a pack rat - sometimes not.

In any event the microfilm is in good shape but its rubber and promptly disintegrated when removed. It can be duplicated if that is proper. The smell of my box was terrible from chemical wet process transfer copies and acetate holders for film. The contents surprised me. I had copies of Dr. Hall's varieties which I learned about long after I did my work. I found his inventory book in my library but never knew then that it was his as there was no name on it.

Planchet feeder material will be responded to separately.

Rob Retz [redacted] February 10, 1998

Dear Rob:

It was fun talking to you. Your enthusiasm for the visit is great. What a pleasure to have you so interested in Fugioing here. My wife and I are going to NY and Boston on February 14 for about two weeks and I can't schedule your visit as you suggest.

I am enclosing photocopies of the Fugio pages in Dr. Hall's inventory. You can study these.

I believe I informed you that I understand that CNL will be publishing some McLaughlin-Spilman variety summaries of past data. Will that help or mess up your opus?

Now as to publishing the Douglas manuscript I think this is going backwards not forward. Your project should be all-inclusive. What Douglas added I am sure Taxay knew and used and perhaps others have studied it. Douglas probably has omissions and unclear matters like everyone else and that is where your(or any new writer's) input is essential.

Sincerely,

Eric P. Newman

Rob Retz [redacted] March 9, 1998

Dear Rob:

Dr. Hall telegraphed me and said that he could not locate his J-11 and that it must have been fugioed. He is having his eyes checked as the spectacles he is wearing are Hubbled a little. Above all he said that you promised him you would send me a copy of his Connecticut variety list and he doesn't think you did it yet.

I have been diverted to other matters of numismatic interest recently and neglected to write you.

My wife and I are planning to take the Queen of the West from Portland on Saturday May 23, 1998 to look for a coin Lewis and Clark lost in the Snake River. Lewis was trying to throw it across the stream with a bear behind but he lost the toss. We are hoping to stay at the Double Tree Hotel Jantzen Beach the night of Friday May 22 and take a city tour the next morning before the boat leaves. Perhaps we might meet in the crater of Mount St. Helens or some other hot spot at a convenient time.

Greetings,

Eric P. Newman

Rob Retz [redacted] March 26, 1998

Dear Rob:

I am afraid we had a mail train's steam engine explode outside of Union Station and the Post Master declared the contents a total loss. Undoubtedly, Dr. Hall's Connecticut listings which you were to send me were among the contents. I will be most appreciative if you could send along another copy as I still have not received any.

The other materials you were kind enough to send to me have arrived safely, and you have my thanks for them.

I look forward to my package of the good Dr. Hall's work on the Grapevine state and her coppers.

Sincerely,

Eric P. Newman

Rob Retz [redacted] April 22, 1998

Dear Rob:

Your January 1998 letter about the planchet feeder design certainly points out critical problems I d onot believe I answered it.

The planchet stop is essential as I see it whether the feeder is hand pushed or automatic. It must be small but must be withdrawn before striking unless it is thinner than the planchet. If it is thinner, planchets will jump it because planchets are often round edged or irregular. A lever to withdraw it seems normal.

Now to get the struck coin out of the way a finger spring or sweeping brush can be mechanical and be pinned so it sweeps out of the way of the upper die. The sweeper can move 120 degrees or 180 degrees and there can be 3 or 2 sweepers in such a set of levers. Can you design one with this thought in mind. Who else can we ask?

There has to be a simple way to push and pull the tongue of the feeder and have it so simple tasks we have assigned to it.

Yours,

Eric P. Newman

Rob Retz [redacted] April 22, 1998

Dear Rob:

I just returned from the ANS Gala and Mossman lecture on the Stepney Hoard and in the mail was your Dr. Hall photocopy. It is great and I thank you for it. Do you know if ANS has a copy because it mentions the Canfield collection of Connecticuts which ANS has. I will make a copy if they do not already have it in their library, unless you have an objection. I'll send it in your name.

I am sorry the first photocopy is among the missing.

Sincerely,

Eric P. Newman

Rob Retz [redacted]

June 4, 1998

Dear Rob:

Believe it or not the February 1998 mailing of the Thomas Hall inventory photocopy was just located in a pile of magazines in the office I share. I am embarrassed but will recover. It was a nuisance for you to redo the group and I thank you again for doing it. The only good that can come out of this is for one of us to want to send the substitute copy I have to someone. I will hold it for the first deserving person you or I feel merits it.

I hope I will see you in Portland in August at the ANA Convention.

Cordially,

Eric P. Newman

Rob Retz [redacted] December 18, 1998

Dear Rob:

Your letter mailed December 10, 1998 was an X-mas greeting rather than a delayed response to my summer letter. The interval gave me time to think. Tick-tock FUGIO, doesn't it.

I am delighted that you have made enormous progress and break through in the Fugio matter. Maybe one of the formerly unavailable collections had a 23-ZZ so you won't need Spilman's photo. If Spilman refuses to send you or Mossman the photo then Spilman expects to publish and doesn't want his opus anticipated by anyone else. Perhaps you can make him coauthor, advisor, sultan, senior sherpa, or CEO of the project, if you so determine. His work on Colonial Newsletter merits great recognition and you ought to give him that build up with CNL citations.

In the interval I think I have solved the feeder mechanism possibly used in 1787. I will not bother you with it at this time but it was you who gave me the first proof that there had to be a planchet placement mechanism because of Fugio variety study.

We will arrange the visit to my box of Fugio material. I should have some original negatives probably and all positives from my study of 50 years ago. They will be a mess but there.

As to your research don't be "devious", just call your persistence enthusiasm, connivance thinking, your spin tact, your stubbornness strength and your snakedness flexibility.

Give your family my best except for the slob Wally who doesn't need it as long as his appetite is satisfied.

Thrive,

Eric P. Newman

Rob Retz [redacted] April 5, 1999

Dear Rob:

Your details as to the April 18, 1999 arrival are at hand.

I suggest you do not take a taxi when you arrive. Please telephone me 727-0850 and tell me you are here. Then go to the Metrolink at the main terminal of the airport which is an electric trolley line. The fare is about $3.00. It is a 15 to 20 minute ride to DEBALIVIERE station where I will meet you. Get off at this station, cross over the tracks and take the elevator or stairway up to street level. I will be there in my car.

I will try to locate the Connecticut coppers you listed for photography. Do you want to see any of my Fugio cents or not? Are there any special coins you want to see? Remember the bank vault will be closed the days you are here.

Let me hear from you before Cincinnati.

Sincerely,

Eric P. Newman

To: Rob Retz
Re: Fugio Coppers

From : Eric P. Newman

Date: May 4, 1999

I am writing an article on the feeder mechanism of the early U.S. period as you know. I need to know the details of whicb Fugio varieties are struck consistently off center and in the same off center position. You indicated there were three. Please give me the variety, the off center clockwise position on obverse or reverse and the extent of the deviation.

I presume there are no exceptions in these varieties. Did you discover this or does someone else get the credit?

Rob Retz [redacted] May 17, 1999

In looking for something under Smithsonian Institution in my files I found some early Fugio correspondence which I thought might be of interest to you for your Fugio work. Copies are enclosed.

January 30, 1951 Breen to Newman

February 6, 1951 Newman to Breen

February 10, 1951 Breen to Newman

July 17, 1951 Newman to Breen

July 19, 1951 Mosher to Newman

July 27, 1951 Newman to Mosher

August 16, 1951 Newman to Mosher

I had no recollection of these at the time you visited.

My best,

Eric P. Newman

To: Rob Retz
Ken Bressett

From: EPNNES

Date: July 21, 1999

I examined the three Fugio dies at ANS. All are made of steel during the 1860 period.

The obverse die has an open crack which extends through the die face and affecting the sun. It extends through to the back.

The two reverse dies have the thin links and are identical , proving that they are made by a transfer hub. One is marked "thin links" and the other is marked "thick links" but this is an error which ANS knows.

Rob Retz [redacted] August 16, 1999

Dear Rob:

Your letter of a few days ago concerning your delays should not concern you as you pointed out that from my file I was accustomed to lame excuses in correspondence. Whenever in the next month or so the material comes back to me is fine.

What was left out of your letter is my reference to the pictures of the 1841 dime. No mention of them was made. Did they come out well?

A reason I hesitate to permit the negatives of my original Fugio plates to be redone is not to hurt your planned revised work on Fugios. I was thinking that your publication might loose part of its appeal. If your work is going to be delayed then I will consider letting C-4 do it but it should at least have pictures of new varieties added. Let me know your feelings after considering these thoughts.

My best,

Eric P. Newman

Rob Retz [redacted] August 30, 1999

Dear Rob:

As to your August 23, 1999 letter my answer is in parts due to several subjects being included.

I appreciate very much your willingness to report your frank feelings and the feelings of others as to the ANS one cent matters including comment concerning the talk I gave during the Chicago ANA at the meeting of the Chicago Coin Club. I was asked by that club to talk on an exciting numismatic experience and I believe you will agree that I did what was requested.

I would not wish on anyone the responsibility to participate in a mess like the Sheldon matter. I was asked to do it and as a member of the ANS Council I felt that I had a fiduciary duty. I knew it might be difficult and complex. ANS being the original victim did what it could to be as fair as possible. ANS did not start the long litigation as suit was filed against ANS. (See Coin World correction on August 23, 1999, p. 105). ANS wanted to compromise from the beginning.

I fully understand most of the feelings of innocent people. I do not "hate" Sheldon. I simply regret Sheldon's action and its effect on others, including ANS, collectors, dealers, etc., including their losses, their disappointments, their frustrations and turmoil. It put many in a very difficult position to learn that they might have stolen material in their hands. After Sheldon committed his thefts he attempted to cover them up by creating false pedigrees, showing no respect for the numismatic community in the future.

Naturally dealers are bothered by extra problems created for them because of stolen coins still at large. At my talk before the Chicago Coin Club a collector and researcher exposed his feelings that ANS had let its attorneys go too far and questioned the ANS position of withdrawing the exchange of the substituted coin for the return of the stolen coin. The staff time for ANS people and the expense of the ANS actions on account of the theft were enormous.

I am fortunate that my "enemies" say what they say about me now. I do not have to wait for what may be said 20 years after my demise as was indicated as to Sheldon in your letter. My "enemies" may even change their minds. My friends may also change their minds. I understand their point of view, and I prefer logic rather than emotion and must recognize conflict of interest wherever it may exist. I feel I must call a spade a spade as to facts.

You raise the point that even if ANS got back all the coins stolen it would be minuscule as to its holdings. How would you like to be an ANS donor and have ANS take little responsibility to recover what you gave. ANS would get severe criticism from some people that ANS failed to do its duty. The public is entitled to enjoy and study the holdings of a museum now and into the future, and any other position is unjustifiable.

You point out that plausible opposing theories can be constructed. Do you feel ANS did not investigate this? ANS concluded and the Court concluded that Sheldon was a thief after a study of an enormous quantity of evidence. It was a body of hard facts, not speculation. Hypothetical theories are not realistic when facts show otherwise.

If those who have or had stolen coins had exchanged them for substituted pieces in the years when that opportunity was available that would have been a reasonable compromise; no lawyers' expense, no litigation and no more trouble. Only a few did that. Some may have felt that ANS could not prove its ownership, and that was a risk that they deliberately took. Some might have returned the stolen coins to the source from which they obtained them, but a rise in value could have influenced the situation.

Please feel free to comment further and to have others do the same. I admire so much your willingness to forward views which may be contrary to mine. You have been unusually helpful and my thinking changes when new facts come to light. None of us know all the answers. Put yourself in my position if you have the nerve to do so, but don't lose any sleep.

Numismatics is great nevertheless.

Yours,

Eric P. Newman

To: Rob Retz
August 30, 1999

From: EPNNES

As to reprinting of the pbotographs of Fugio coppers from my original negatives I am glad to follow your thinking. You already have my caveats. The conditions under whicb consent is given for the use of the negatives or any part thereof include the following:

1. Use for C-4 purposes only for publishing and/or selling of positive images.
2. This is a non-exclusive right and we can also do so or let others do so. We have no sucb intentions bowever.
3. There will be no payments to us for C-4 use.
4. The Eric P. Newman or Newman name or intial shall be used in appropriate places. There sball be no mention of the name Kessler or any variation or abbreviation thereof.
5. We will receive 6 gratis copies of any use.
6. The C-4 right to use sball expire on January 1, 2001 but anything publisbed and available before sucb date may be sold thereafter.
7. The right to use may not be assigned.
8. The negatives shall be promptly returned after use.
9. Rob Retz may wisb to add any other conditions.

To: Rob Retz
September 3, 1999

From: EPNNES

More on your recent communications.

The pbotographs you took at my bome have been cbecked and I admire your pbotographic prowess. I thank you so mucb for the positives.

The Connecticuts are very sharp and clear but the color seem odd on some. 1787 3-D(1) is dark green on the print and dark brown in fact. Some of the other pictures are artificially greenisb. I guess that improves them. There were no pictures of 1787 15©R or 1788 2-D. I presume you bave no extra copies of these or they didn't come out.

The Fugios came out very well and I bope they belp you.

The 1841 dime pictures are nice enough for my purposes, but my eyes are not sharp enough to tell if they can be improved.

The two boxes of borrowed Fugio material arrived but have not yet been opened or examined. If the negatives of the Fugios are there you sbould tell me what you want me to do with them as to C-4.